

over the next three, four years, and that is a subject which Senator Beutler has touched on, the fact that some counties may be too small. As you all well know, those were established by the Constitution, can't be changed except by constitutional amendment, which the Legislature can't. What we can do and it has been done in many instances, been in effect for 35, 40 years, is devise incentives for Interlocal Cooperation Act, where some of these smaller counties, perhaps, or smaller entities of government, for that matter, might be able to become more cost effective and still avoid some of the problems that otherwise exist. But I would be very hesitant to vote for this amendment to start this as a precedent, which it inevitably may well become, without a more of a balanced look at all kinds of aid programs that might exist as far as their distribution, whether it is to be related to population or geography or any number of other things. This is a new type that I think would not be well. And, finally, we've spent a lot of time, or others have, at least, on 646 talking about tax aspects, and that is a part of it, but, to me, that is a secondary factor. To me, by far the more important factor is equity of justice across the state. Senator Matzke made some reference to that issue. I believe others have as well, but, to me, the concept in 646, regardless of what happens to it, the concept that is most important is one of having some equal equity in both the prosecution as well as the defense of indigents, which I think now depends far too much on the assets, it might be they are locally or the background and assets, not only money, but assets in terms of capabilities, knowledge, background of attorneys who have experience with these kind of acts or these kind of cases. But I would hope the body would not adopt this amendment, but certainly it is a factor that over the next couple of years, if we do make significant...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR WARNER: ...changes in our tax structure, then the subject that is being addressed by the amendment most certainly will be appropriate and will be a part of it. But I do not believe that this is an approach for distribution of state aid that would be divide...that would be advisable at all to have it balanced...or have it relate to the total appropriation for otherwise state function.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Kristensen, followed by Senators Witek, Vrtiska, and Wesely.